

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEL AV 05643 01 OF 02 271646Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSM-03
MCT-01 HA-05 AID-05 /087 W
-----072135 271721Z /43

O R 271547Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2856
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 5643

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, PDEV, IS
SUBJ: THE BEGIN VISIT: ISRAELI SETTLEMENT POLICY

REF: TEL AVIV 3118

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: THE GENERAL OUTLINES OF ISRAELI
SETTLEMENT POLICY HAVE REMAINED CONSTANT SINCE THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEL AV 05643 01 OF 02 271646Z

FEBRUARY 26 CABINET SESSION. NO NEW SETTLEMENTS HAVE
BEEN APPROVED OR ESTABLISHED BEYOND THE GREEN LINE IN
THE PAST TWO MONTHS. HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE LET
UP IN CONSTRUCTION AT EXISTING SETTLEMENTS AND AT SITES
AT WHICH WORK WAS BEGUN PRIOR TO THE FEBRUARY 26 CABINET
DECISIONS. THE INTENSE EARLY MARCH DEBATE IN ISRAEL ON SET-
TLEMENT POLICY WAS ECLIPSED BY THE MARCH 11 TERRORIST RAID

AND THE SUBSEQUENT IDF INCURSION INTO LEBANON. DESPITE THE ADVOCACY BY THE "PEACE NOW" MOVEMENT OF A MORATORIUM ON PROVOCATIVE SETTLEMENT IN THE TERRITORIES, PUBLIC OPINION IN ISRAEL CURRENTLY IS NOT FOCUSED ON THIS ISSUE. ON THE OTHER HAND, GUSH EMUNIM, AS IS ITS CUSTOM WHEN PEACE NEGOTIATIONS APPEAR ABOUT TO GO INTO HEAR, IS STEPPING UP ITS PRESSURE ON BEGIN TO ACCELERATE SETTLEMENT ON THE WEST BANK. IN ADDITION, THE GUSH SETTLERS AT SHILO HAVE REJECTED THE GOVERNMENT'S SUGGESTION THAT THEY RELOCATE TO ANOTHER SITE, CALLED FOR APPROVAL OF SHILO AS A PERMANENT SETTLEMENT AND THREATENED TO RESIST IF THE GOVERNMENT TRIES TO REMOVE THEM BY FORCE. THE SHILO SETTLERS MAY SOON TRY TO FORCE THE ISSUE BY BEGINNING TO DEVELOP THE SITE THEMSELVES. MEANWHILE, RESPONSIBILITY FOR SETTLEMENT DECISION-MAKING HAS BEEN TRANSFERRED TO THE MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON SECURITY AFFAIRS HEADED BY THE PRIME MINISTER. BEGIN HAS TAKEN FIRMER PERSONAL CONTROL OF SETTLEMENT DECISIONS AND SHARON'S AUTHORITY IN THIS AREA HAS BEEN REDUCED. AS BEGIN DEPARTS FOR WASHINGTON HE PROBABLY FEELS THAT THE GOI'S DECISION NOT TO APPROVE OR ESTABLISH ANY NEW SETTLEMENTS IN THE PAST TWO MONTHS IS A SUITABLE GESTURE OF GOODWILL TO BOTH THE U.S. AND EGYPT. SHORT OF A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, BEGIN IS UNLIKELY TO GO MUCH FURTHER THAT HE ALREADY HAS IN RESTRAINING SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY. END SUMMARY.

2. THE GENERAL OUTLINES OF ISRAELI SETTLEMENT POLICY HAVE NOT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TEL AV 05643 01 OF 02 271646Z

CHANGED SINCE PRIME MINISTER BEGIN'S LAST VISIT TO THE U.S. THE CABINET'S FEBRUARY 26 SETTLEMENT DECISIONS REMAIN IN FORCE; IN CONSEQUENCE, NO NEW SETTLEMENTS HAVE BEEN APPROVED OR ESTABLISHED IN THE SINAI, GOLAN HEIGHTS AND WEST BANK FOR THE PAST TWO MONTHS. HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN LITTLE LET UP IN CONSTRUCTION AT EXISTING SETTLEMENTS AND AT SITES AT WHICH WORK WAS BEGUN PRIOR TO THE FEBRUARY 26 CABINET DECISIONS.

3. THE STANDOFF BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND THE GUSH EMUNIM WOULD-BE SETTLERS AT SHILO CONTINUES. IN MID-MARCH DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER TZIPORI SUGGESTED TO THE SETTLERS THAT THEY MOVE TO ANOTHER WEST BANK SITE. THEIR RESONSE WAS A FLAT NO. SEVERAL WEEKS LATER, TZIPORI PUBLICLY STATED ON APRIL 17 THAT THE SHILO CAMP HAD BEEN SET UP WITHOUT GOVERNMENT APPROVAL, NO PERMISSION HAD BEEN GRANTED SUBSEQUENT TO ITS ESTABLISHMENT, NOW WOULD AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION BE ALLOWED TO BASE ITSELF THERE. HE STRESSED THAT THE WHOLE QUESTION REVOLVED AROUND EIGHT FAMILIES WHOSE SECURITY IS GUARANTEED BY THE IDF AND WHOSE BREADWINNERS WORK IN JERUSALEM. NONETHELESS, THE GOVERNMENT REMAINS UNWILLING TO EVICT THE SETTLERS BY FORCE. THE SETTLERS CONTINUE TO DEMAND THAT SHILO BE APPROVED AS A PERMANENT SETTLEMENT AND THREATEN TO RESIST IF THE ARMY TRIES TO REMOVE THEM. THE SHILO SETTLERS

MAY SOON TRY TO FORCE THE ISSUE BY BEGINNING TO DEVELOP THE SITE THEMSELVES.

4. THE MILITARY FIGLEAF COVERING ONE OR MORE OF THE WEST BANK SETTLEMENT/MILITARY OUTPOSTS HAS BEEN SHRINKING OF LATE. AT KARNEI SHOMRON, SETTLERS CLAIM THAT THE SITE IS CIVILIAN WHILE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TEL AV 05643 02 OF 02 271715Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00
PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 SSM-03
MCT-01 HA-05 AID-05 /087 W
-----072582 271720Z /43

O R 271547Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2857
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 TEL AVIV 5643

THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE STATES THAT IT IS A MILITARY CAMP WITH SETTLERS. THE ABSENCE OF ANY NOTABLE MILITARY PRESENCE, EXCEPT FOR A SMALL UNIT HELPING WITH GUARD DUTY, SUGGESTS THERE MIGHT BE SOMETHING TO THE SETTLERS' CLAIM.

5. A MAJOR CHANGE IN GOI SETTLEMENT DECISION-MAKING OCCURRED IN MID-APRIL WHEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR APPROVAL OF NEW AND THE EX-

PANSION OF EXISTING SETTLEMENTS BEYOND THE GREEN LINE WAS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEL AV 05643 02 OF 02 271715Z

TRANSFERRED FROM SHARON'S SETTLEMENT COMMITTEE TO THE MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE FOR SECURITY AFFAIRS HEADED BY BEGIN. THE CHANGE WAS SUGGESTED TO THE GOVERNMENT BY BEGIN AT WEIZMAN'S REQUEST AND APPROVED BY A CABINET MAJORITY. PRIOR TO HIS MARCH VISIT TO THE U.S., BEGIN HAD PROMISED TO TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT INTER-MINISTERIAL SQUABBLES OVER SETTLEMENT POLICY. TRANSFERRING DECISION MAKING TO A FORUM HEADED BY THE PRIME MINISTER WAS BEGIN'S APPROACH TO THE PROBLEM. A RESULT OF THIS CHANGE HAS BEEN A REDUCTION IN SHARON'S AUTHORITY IN SETTLEMENT AFFAIRS. HOWEVER, THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE WILL CONTINUE TO IMPLEMENT DECISIONS AND SHARON WILL, THEREFORE, CONTINUE TO PLAY A KEY OPERATIONAL ROLE IN THIS AREA. ANOTHER ELEMENT OF THIS CHANGE IS A POSSIBLE REDUCTION IN MEDIA COVERAGE OF SETTLEMENT DELIBERATIONS IN THE GOVERNMENT BECAUSE THE MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE FOR SECURITY AFFAIRS IS UNDER A TOTAL NEWS BLACKOUT AND THE CENSOR PROHIBITS ANY REPORT DEALING WITH ITS DELIBERATIONS. IN ANY CASE, IT IS STILL TWO EARLY TO JUDGE WHAT IMPACT THIS SHIFT IN RESPONSIBILITY WILL ACTUALLY HAVE ON DECISION-MAKING.

6. THE INTENSE EARLY MARCH PUBLIC DEBATE IN ISRAEL ON SETTLEMENT POLICY WAS ECLIPSED BY THE MARCH 11 TERRORIST RAID AND THE SUBSEQUENT IDF INCURSION INTO LEBANON. THESE LATTER DEVELOPMENTS, NEITHER OF WHICH SHOWED THE ISRAELI DEFENSE ESTABLISHMENT AT ITS BEST, MAY HAVE A RESTRAINING AFFECT ON WEIZMAN'S WILLINGNESS TO GO OUT ON A LIMB IN THE CABINET REGARDING SETTLEMENTS. IT IS NOTABLE THAT WEIZMAN'S RIVALS WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT, SHARON AND DAYAN, HAVE NOT PUBLICLY CRITICIZED THE CONDUCT OF THE LEBANESE OPERATION OR WEIZMAN'S ROLE IN IT. NONETHELESS, THEIR SILENCE MAY HAVE A POLITICAL PRICE AND WEIZMAN'S ABILITY TO CONFRONT THEM ON THE SETTLEMENT ISSUE MAY HAVE DECREASED. A LOWER WEIZMAN PROFILE IN SETTLEMENT DELIBERATIONS WILL INHIBIT EVEN FURTHER THE CAUTIOUS LIBERAL AND DMC MINISTERS FAVORING A MODERATE POLICY. AS A RESULT, BEGIN'S ROLE IN DEVELOPING THE GOI'S
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TEL AV 05643 02 OF 02 271715Z

SETTLEMENT LINE HAS BECOME EVEN MORE SIGNIFICANT. THE "PEACE NOW" MOVEMENT, WHICH HAS CALLED FOR A MORE POSITIVE PEACE POLICY AND A MORATORIUM ON PROVOCATIVE SETTLEMENT IN THE TERRITORIES, HAS SO FAR NOT HAD ANY NOTABLE IMPACT ON GOVERNMENT POLICY.

7. AS IT DOES WHENEVER THE NEGOTIATING PROCESS BEGINS TO GO INTO HEAR, GUSH EMUNIM IS AGAIN PRESSING BEGIN FOR MORE AND

ACCELERATED SETTLEMENT ON THE WEST BANK. AT AN APRIL 24 PRESS CONFERENCE THEY ANNOUNCED A MASTER PLAN TO SETTLE A MILLION JEWS ON THE WEST BANK WITHIN 25 YEARS. MORE IMPORTANT WAS THEIR DEMAND THAT THE GOVERNMENT APPROVE NEW SETTLEMENTS, INCREASE CONSTRUCTION AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GUSH-AFFILIATED FAMILIES WILLING TO SETTLE, AND RECOGNIZE SHILO AS A PERMANENT SETTLEMENT. BEGIN HAS A COMPLICATED RELATIONSHIP WITH THE GUSH. THEY ARE "HIS PEOPLE" AND HE SHARES MANY OF THEIR BELIEFS AND OBJECTIVES. AT THE SAME TIME, HE INCREASINGLY RECOGNIZES THAT INTERNATIONAL REALITIES MAY REQUIRE LESS IDEOLOGICALLY PURE COURSES OF ACTION. THE GUSH'S TACTICS IN DECLINING TO GO ALONG WITH THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL FACADE AT SHILO AND THE MILITARY FIGLEAF AT KARNEI SHAMRON HAS ALSO SOURED THEIR RELATIONS TO A DEGREE. NONETHELESS, HE FINDS IT EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO CONTEMPLATE THE USE OF FORCE AGAINST THEM. GUSH LEADERS, FANATICS POSSESSING A KEEN UNDERSTANDING OF BEGIN'S PERSONALITY, HAVE NO QUALMS AGAINST GOING TO THE BRINK OF A CONFRONTATION AND USING THE POSSIBILITY OF VIOLENCE AS APSYCHOLOGICAL WEAPON AGAINST HIM. AT THIS POINT, BEGIN HIMSELF PROBABLY DOES NOT KNOW HOW HE WILL HANDLE THE GUSH.

8. AS BEGIN LEAVES FOR WASHINGTON HE PROBABLY FEELS THAT HE HAS BEEN VERY FORTHCOMING REGARDING U.S. DEMANDS AND EGYPTIAN CONCERNS REGARDING SETTLEMENTS. HE WILL NO DOUBT STRESS THE GOI'S DECISION NOT TO APPROVE OR ESTABLISH ANY NEW SETTLEMENTS DURING THE PAST TWO MONTHS AS A GESTURE OF GOODWILL. HE IS LIKELY TO STATE IN PRIVATE THAT THIS POLICY LINE WILL CONTINUE WHILE ACTIVE NEGOTIATIONS ARE IN PROGRESS. IF THE U.S. POINTS TO THE UNRESTRAINED CONSTRUCTION IN EXISTING SETTLEMENTS BEYOND THE

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 TEL AV 05643 02 OF 02 271715Z

GREEN LINE, BEGIN WILL SAY THAT HE CANNOT JUST WASH HIS HANDS OF THE SETTLERS. IN ANY CASE, HE WILL ARGUE THAT ON THE BASIS OF THE ISRAELI PEACE PLAN THERE IS NO CONTRADICTION BETWEEN PEACE AND ISRAELI SETTLEMENTS. FURTHERMORE, BEGIN WILL STRESS THAT THE WEST BANK IS A SPECIAL CASE AND THAT IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT JEWS SHOULD NOT BE ALLOWED TO LIVE THERE. SHORT OF A MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH IN THE NEGOTIATIONS, BEGIN IS UNLIKELY TO GO MUCH FURTHER THAN HE ALREADY HAS IN RESTRAINING SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LAND SETTLEMENT, BRIEFING MATERIALS, MINISTERIAL VISITS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, MILITARY OCCUPIED AREAS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 27 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TELAV05643
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780180-0655
Format: TEL
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978048/aaaaagbz.tel
Line Count: 267
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 10e934b4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 TEL AVIV 3118
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3035698
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: THE BEGIN VISIT: ISRAELI SETTLEMENT POLICY
TAGS: PBOR, PDEV, IS, (BEGIN, MENACHEM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/10e934b4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014